

~~Mint of the United States at Philadelphia, Pa.,~~

~~SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE,~~

(Copy:)

March, 1887.

Sir:

I have the honor to acknowledge the reference by you of a communication from the Supt. of the Phila. Mint, and the letter of C. L. Totten, Lieut. 4th Artillery, U. S. Army, in regard to the striking of a medal representing the reverse of the United States Seal, and asking that the new international coin - the gold - be thus designed; and your request that I should report whether there is any objection to authorizing Mr. Snowden to strike the medal spoken of.

Section 3551 of the Revised Statutes provides that "dies of a national character may be executed by the Engraver, and national and other medals struck by the Coiner of the Mint at Phila, under such regulations as the Superintendent, with the approval of the Director of the Mint, may prescribe."

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No construction has been given to the phrase "dies of a national character." On several occasions Resolutions and Acts of Congress have been passed, authorizing and directing certain medals to be struck and bestowed upon persons for services named, and appropriations were made to defray the expenses. Besides those for particularly distinguished officers and individuals named by Congress, medals are given under Appropriation Acts authorizing the bestowal of medals for gallantry in the Life Saving Service, and also medals of the Presidents have been furnished to the Interior Dept. and paid for out of an appropriation for the expenses for the Indian Service.

If the term "dies of a national character and national medals," is limited to the execution of dies for such medals as Congress has authorized to

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be made, the preparation of the proposed die at the Mint is prohibited by Sect. 3551 of the Revised Statutes, which provides that no private medal dies shall be prepared at the Mint. If a broader interpretation is to be given to the language, a medal commemorative of the adoption of the U.S. Seal might be termed "national." The propriety, however, of executing dies and striking medals at the Mint for all occasions as memorable as even this may be, is questionable.

The 20th of June next, which it is proposed to commemorate, by striking a medal, is the Centennial anniversary of the adoption of the Seal, not by the U.S. nation, but by the Congress of the "Confederation of the United States." over six years prior to the adoption of the Constitution, and the organization of the Gov't under it. The Seal in question became the Seal of the United States

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of America, by the Act of Sept 15th, 1789, which provides that the Seal heretofore used by the U. S. in Congress assembled shall be, and is hereby declared to be, the Seal of the U. S. " The 20th of June next would, therefore, be the anniversary of the adoption of the Seal, by the Confederation, and over seven years prior to the Centennial Anniversary of the adoption of the National Seal.

But few national events have been deemed of sufficient importance to require the striking of a medal in their commemoration. The adoption of the Seal by the "Congress of the Confederation," even if deemed a national act, does not seem to me to be of such pre-eminence among other historical events as to justify the striking of a medal in its commemoration.

Whether the execution of a die as pro=

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posed would be proper or otherwise, a medal may be struck, conformably to the regulations governing the Mint service, from a die already existing, or one privately furnished. But as the Seal of the U. S. is used to authenticate and give validity to official documents, a medal giving a fac-simile impression might furnish convenient facilities for dangerous counterfeits, and I would respectfully suggest—whether, without the consent of the Sec. of State, who has the custody of the Seal, the striking of such a medal for sale to the public should be permitted.

The papers referred to me are herewith returned.

Respectfully

(Signed)

H. C. Burchard,

Hon. Chas. J. Folger,

Director.

Sec. of the Treas.

~~Mint Bureau~~
~~Mint of the United States at Philadelphia, Pa.,~~
~~SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE,~~

March —, 1882

H. C. Burchard
~~Superintendent.~~

~~Director~~

(Copy)

Objection to a
proposed fac-
simile Medall
the Great Seal of
the U. S.

No. of Enclosures, 1

[Abstract:] Objections to a proposed fac-simile Medals this Great Seals the U.S.

~~Mint of the United States at Philadelphia, Pa.,~~
~~Superintendent's Office,~~
March, 1882

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Section 3551 of the Revised Statutes provides that “dies of a national character may be executed by the Engraver, and national character may be executed by the Engraver, and national and other medals struck by the Coiner of the Mint at Phila., under such regulations as the Superintendent, with the approval of the Director of the Mint, may prescribe.” No construction has been given to the phrase “dies of a national character”. On several occasions Resolutions and Acts of Congress have been passed, authorizing and directing certain medals to be struck and bestowed upon persons for services named, and appropriations were made to defray the expenses. Besides those for particularly distinguished officers and individuals named by Congress, medals are given under Appropriation Acts authorizing the bestowal of medals for gallantry in the Life Saving Service, and also medals of the Presidents have been furnished to the Interior Dept. and paid for out. Of an appropriation for the expenses for the Indian Service.

If the term “dies of a national character and national medals”, is limited to the execution of dies for such medals as Congress has authorized to be made, the preparation of the proposed die at the Mint is prohibited by Sect. 3551 of the Revised Statutes, which provides that no private medals dies shall be prepared at the Mint. If a broader interpretation is to be given to the language, a medal commemorative of the adoption of the U.S. Seal might be termed “national”. The propriety, however, of executing dies and striking medals at the Mint for all occasions as memorable as even this may be, is questionable.

The 20th of June next, which it is proposed to commemorate, by striking a medal, is the Centennial Anniversary of the adoption of the Seal, not by the U.S. nation, but by the Congress of the “Confederation of the United States”, over the six years prior to the adoption of the Constitution, and the organization of the Gov’t. under it. The Seal in question became the Seal of the United States of America, by the Act of Sept. 15th, 1789, which provides that the Seal heretofore used by the U.S. in Congress assembled shall be, and is hereby declared to be, the Seal of the U.S.” The 20th of June next would, therefore, be the anniversary of the adoption of the Seal, by the Confederation, and over seven years prior to the Centennial Anniversary of the adoption of the National Seal.

But the few national events have been deemed of sufficient importance to require the striking of a medal in their commemoration. The adoption of the Seal by the "Congress of the Confederation", even if deemed a national act, does not seem to me to be of such pre-eminence among other historical events as to justify the striking of a medal in its commemoration.

Whether the execution of a dies as proposed would be proper or otherwise, a medal may be struck, conformably to the regulations governing the Mint service, from a die already existing, or one privately furnished. But as the Seal of the U.S. is used to authenticate and give validity to official documents, a medal giving a fac-simile impression might furnish convenient facilities for dangerous counterfeits, and I would respectfully suggest whether, without the consent of the Sec. of State, who has the custody of the Seal, the striking of such a medal for sale to the public should be permitted.

The papers referred to me are herewith returned.

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(Signed) H.C. Burchard.
Director.

Hon. Chas. J. Folger,
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